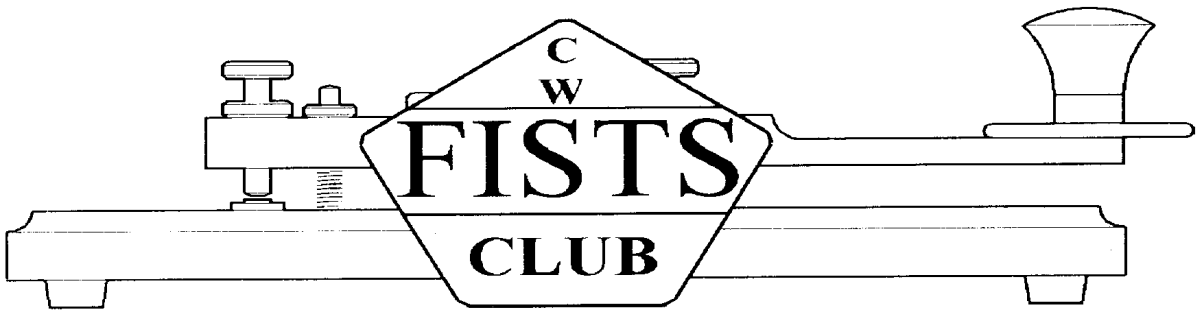


# The Keynote

Newsletter of FISTS CW Club, the active chapter of the  
International Morse Preservation Society

“Accuracy Transcends Speed”



- Further the use of CW
- Encourage newcomers to use CW
- Engender friendships among members

“When You’ve Worked A FISTS , You’ve Worked A Friend”

## HOW DO I...

**...ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES?** Irene WO8E 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066 has gold logo stickers, 200 for \$5; Blue enamel/gold metal clasp-back logo pins \$3.50; Cloth logo patches 3" octagon shaped \$1.50 Rubber stamps with the FISTS logo for use with an ink pad (not included) for \$5. "I Support KNOW Code" buttons for .75 FISTS Logo mugs are currently out of stock. These prices DO include first class postage.

**...GET AN UP-TO-DATE MEMBERLIST?** The list is printed in the KeyNote twice a year and is also on the Web page. A printed updated list may be obtained by sending \$1 (to defray costs- it's 10 pages long) to Ed N7CFA 2628 Lilac Street, Longview WA 98632.

**...GET ON THE FISTS ON-LINE Email LIST?** Send your Email address with your name/call/ FISTS number to blafont@tir.com

**...GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO?** Stan K4UK, with the assistance of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club handles FISTS QSL bureau. Sort your outgoing FISTS cards by call area, then alphabetically and mail to K4UK, 1020 Long Island Dr, Moneta VA 24121. To receive cards you may have waiting at the bureau, send K4UK a few SASEs. QSLs will NOT be sent to you unless you have sent in an SASE or made arrangements with Stan. His Email is stanreas@rev.net

**...RENEW MY KEYNOTE SUBSCRIPTION?** Send a check/M.O. made out to FISTS for \$15/year to Nancy WZ8C POBox 47 Hadley MI 48440. **What's the Family Plan?** All CW folks at the same QTH can belong to FISTS for one subscription fee of \$15. You will each have your own FISTS number, but only one Keynote will be mailed per address. Student rate = \$10 if not in a Family Plan.

**...SPONSOR A DX FISTS?** DX FISTS have a separate block of numbers; their Keynote is mailed from Geo G3ZQS. Send their info to Geo 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs, BB3 2LZ; he'll send them a DX application.

**...HAVE AN APPLICATION OR NEWSLETTER SAMPLE SENT TO FRIENDS?** Send their address Joe K5HLR 29 Melrose Dr, Marrero LA, 70072. Pse enclose \$1 if sample Keynote is requested. An application is also available, in text format, for downloading on our Web page <http://www.FISTS.org>

**...APPLY FOR THE CENTURY or WAS AWARD?** Send a list of contacts (call, FISTS #, qth, date, band) and power used to Lee N9NVV 4530 N 15th Street Terre Haute IN 47805 Don't submit QSLs. There is no charge to FISTS members for the regular Century Award. If you are applying for the Golden Century, send your request to HQ in England (119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs England BB3 2LZ) including sufficient return postage. Lee's Email is n9nvv@www.qrp.com or packet: n9nvv@k9iu.#sin.in.usa.noam

**...VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY?** Ed WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Reading PA 19606

**...SHARE COMPUTER SOFTWARE?** Joe WZ8U 5428 Bolander Grand Blanc MI 48439

**...GET MY PHOTO ON THE PHOTOPAGES?** Send a snapshot of yourself to Ken W8ROG 25206 Hayes Roseville MI 48066.

**...GET A COPY OF FISTS PRESENTATION** to give at my local club meeting? Contact Randy K8EZ, 2674 Gemini Dr, Lk Orion MI 48360 email - k8ez@concentric.net

**...FIND THE WEB PAGE?** <http://www.FISTS.org>

**...SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE?** Contact Bill KK4KF at bjmyers@arc.net

**...ORDER FISTS CLUB QSL CARDS?** send SASE to WX9X at 354 West St, Valparaiso IN 46383

**...ORDER A FISTS CLUB ID BADGE?** Our club badge is dark blue, with FISTS logo in gold and your name, FISTS number, callsign and "Int'l Morse Preservation Society" in white. They are \$6.95 post-paid from The Signman of Baton Rouge 879 Castle Kirk Dr, Baton Rouge LA 70808; email nv5a@aol.com

A non-engraved, laminated club badge is available from Bruce Eichmann W2BE, 204 E. Lake Blvd, Medford NJ 08055. Cost is \$4.75, NJ residents \$5.00 because of tax.

**...IMPROVE MY CODE SPEED and MEET LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS?** Join FISTS! Get involved in the nets and activities!

The Keynote is published approximately monthly by Nancy Kott WZ8C, P. O. Box 47, Hadley MI 48440-0047  
Email: nancy@tir.com WZ8C reserves the right to edit submissions for space, clarity and topic suitability. Comments not attributed to another are written by WZ8C. Articles from The Keynote may be reprinted if credit is given to the original author.

# *NORTH* KEYNOTE *AMERICAN*

Slow Traffic Net: Tuesday & Thursday 9pm EST on 3.682      Slow Ragchewing Group: W8BI 8pm EST Wed on 3.720  
Century Award Net: Sunday 2000Z on 14.058MHz      Saturday QSO Groups: 14.058 at 2000Z and 7.058 at 2300Z  
Please keep watch on the Novice Bands and frequencies ending in .x58 (.058, .158, .258 etc)  
Accuracy Transcends Speed      Courtesy At All Times

Hello FISTS! This has been a record month for the number of new FISTS joining. As far as I know, we're the only club that relies on word of mouth (or key!); we don't buy advertising in magazines. Our phenomenal growth rate is a real testimony to the enthusiasm we have for FISTS and Morse code. Thank you to all who are helping spread the word about FISTS, I'm glad FISTS is the type of organization you are proud to recommend to your friends. As you might imagine, I put a lot of time in each month keeping things running and writing the KeyNote but there are also many others 'behind the scenes' who provide indispensable services. A glance of the opposite page of this newsletter will give you an idea of how many others donate their time and resources to making FISTS successful. A big, huge, sincere thank you to all!

I've been hearing rumors about this for some time from my sources, but I didn't want to print it until it was official - and the official word finally came this morning from the ARRL that the Morse requirement will NOT be on the agenda of the World Radio Conference in 1999 (WRC-99). This could mean that it will be postponed until the WRC in 2001, or it might not be discussed at all. But this doesn't mean that we can relax and get complacent. There is still vociferous (a good \$10 word I learned at Dayton last year!) anti-code requirement proponents out there. It would be a big mistake to assume that they are going to go away or give up. If you have Email, please send your Email address to Brian W8BL at [blafont@tir.com](mailto:blafont@tir.com) so we can send out bulletins as needed to keep you informed.

The other big news is that the rules for the Awards Program is going to change as of the first of next year. HQ in England reviewed the current award situation and decided that since FISTS membership is growing more quickly than originally anticipated, the awards system needed to be revamped to make sure the awards retain their integrity. It used to be quite a challenge to get a Century Award, as the early Century Award holders can attest to. Now, you can work a Sprint and earn a Century! People are applying for 4th, 5th, 6th Centurys and it was just getting out of hand. So, to make it more challenging they've upped the stakes a bit, so to say. I know this is going to not sit well with everyone, but here it goes:

"The Award system changes on Dec 31 1997 to

100pts for a Century Award (one only)  
500pts for a Gold Award (one only)  
1000pts for Diamond Award (one only)  
100 award holders Platinum Award (one only)

Until that date members can apply for as many awards as they have contacts. They must all remember that they cannot use the same contact for the different awards except for the Platinum.

Application forms will be checked for duplications"

If you write to Geo about this, please take a deep breath and count to ten before you put pen to paper! I sent this announcement out via Email a week ago and some of the letters I've gotten in response would curl my hair if it weren't already naturally curly. A couple that Geo forwarded to me were even worse. There is NO need to use bad language, call people names or question their ancestry! CW ops are gentlemen/ladies, please remember that Courtesy At All Times applies to off the air as well as on the air.

# Welcome to the New FISTS

Sponsor

AK8N	Robert	3959	OH	W9LUIY	KR3C	Tim	4010	PA	N3AO
WB2TDJ	Murray	3960	NY	KB2BWO	K1EXE	James	4011	FL	
WA4KER	Howard	3961	FL		AA1RO	Myron	4012	MA	W1SGI
KU4LL	David	3962	TN	K5HLR	W6QGD	Earle	4013	CA	AC6QO
W4PWA	Bill	3963	VA	K4UK	W0SZF	Verle	4014	TX	W8VQV
W4SI	Rodney	3964	NC	N5BI	K4FDK	John	4015	KY	K4YKI
KN6FR	Rick	3965	CA		W3NGO	Richard	4016	PA	WD8OCV
WN6NW	David	3966	CA		W7QM	Al	4017	WA	WA7MMG
KF4NUB	Jep	3967	AL	KA1RVV	KF4FXT	Tom	4018	VA	KC8D
W2VRK	Anthony	3968	NJ	WB2YOP	CE3FGX	Didier	4019		
KC8IGY	Tom	3969	MI	AA8YO	WD5BVQ	Craig	4020	LA	W6DDB
KG8XM	Ron	3970	MI	AA8YO	N5URL	Bob	4021	OK	WA2AHH
K8VT	Carter	3971	MI	K8TFD	KKF8FA	William	4022	OH	
WB8E	Walter	3972	MI	W08E	N8ZUM	Bill	4023	MI	WB2UEC
W8KC	Paul	3973	MI	WZ8C	AE3H	Charlie	4024	DE	
KA8NDY	Dan	3974	MI		AB5UP	John	4025	TX	
KC8GTX	Michael	3975	MI		N1AKG	Jim	4026	MA	
N8WR	Jeff	3976	MI	K8EN	KD2N	Gus	4027	NY	
KF4TPT	Phil	3977	FL	N9ZNF	AA1SU	Paul	4028	VT	W4HZD
WB5CDX	Wadsworth	3978	LA	K5HLR	KC7PPF	James	4029	WA	K5HLR
N1YZP	Jim	3979	CT	KG9HV	KD4ZRD	Billy	4030	VA	
KC2BEK	Ken	3980	NY	AB2AU	KB8KIK	Chuck	4031	OH	KC5VJU
KB0JT	Paul	3981	IA	WB0T	K06QZ	Dennis	4032	CA	KB7PIM
K6WN	Gary	3982	CA	KC5VJU	KC8DEN	Dale	4033	OH	
W7OD	Bob	3983	WA	SOWP	W2MJP	Jerry	4034	NY	W08E
W5USJ	Chuck	3984	TX		WB8WBQ	Homer	4035	OH	K7UF
W2RRJ	Jack	3985	SC	W8LQ	K6IME	Lee	4036	CA	K6DF
KC8GWW	Rich	3986	OH		K5RA	Tim	4037	TX	AA0WZ
N0IBT	Dave	3987	CO		W5XW	Robert	4038	TX	W9LUIY
K9QHO	Mike	3988	IN	KE4HOS	AA0RC	Doc	4039	KS	
KG0PP	Jim	3989	CO	W4HZD	NW8G	John	4040	AL	N4ZMP
VE3CQD	Dan	3990	ONT	N3RSD	W1MOZ	Bob	4041	ME	KG8UM
WA0RGG	Bud	3991	CO	K3CJQ	KB0YXP	Brian	4042	MO	
K10F	Roger	3992	MN	KB0RGU	W8GAC	John	4043	OH	
KF6MBG	Kevin	3993	CA	KC7QOP	KC7RFK	Eric	4044	WA	K5HLR
KD6ZBN	Les	3994	CA	KF6GUH	KD4OZB	Rey	4045	NC	N3XJQ
WA5VJF	Ed	3995	MO		W6QMU	Doyle	4046	CA	W7BWI
W7WHO	Dennis	3996	OR	W4HZD	AB5YY	Doug	4047	MS	W2NTS
K17FQ	Mike	3997	CA		KQ6PI	Tim	4048	CA	KA5QYR
N3XIM	Cliff	3998	PA	KG8QO	W4BX	Frank	4049	MO	W0GZ
KC7WDD	B.H.	3999	WY	KC5SAM	K7TFW	Don	4050	WY	Webpage
K4UOZ	Ray	4000	GA	K4UK	KB8MCI	Jody	4051	MI	Webpage
N1CSD	Gene	4001	TX	N4ZMP	W6COS	Bill	4052	CA	W6NKE
N1RVQ	Laurier	4002	ME	N1CUR	N6DM	Don	4053	CA	NY2V
N4RKR	James	4003	FL	W3JIM	AA2QL	Freddie	4054	NY	K1TXU
KB9LSH	Ronald	4004	NY	AI9L	W1MCG	Edward	4055	MA	
WQ1Q	Mae	4005	RI		N6MNZ	Mark	4056	CA	N4ZMP
N1EI	Charlie	4006	CT		KA8WNO	Jack	4057	WV	WB5ZJN
VE6ADM	George	4007	AB	AI9L	K7PBT	Dick	4058	WA	
N1FTNX	Jim	4008	CT	W8FDV	WG1H	Al	4059	MA	N1WLC
N0VPZ	David	4009	WI		K10GW	Jack	4060	MN	
					WD8MGO	Fred	4061	OH	
					KE4TSS	Ed	4062	NY	W3CG/N2MQ

W1IK	William	4063	MI	KA8NDY
KB0TFV	Ira	4064	IA	
KB9OVS	Art	4065	IL	KE4VOQ
W8SFF	Steve	4066	MI	
KA3ZBN	Don	4067	MD	W3JIM
AF4ER	Tom	4068	TN	K6DF
KA8YRV	Mike	4069	OH	NY2V
K2CQV	Dave	4070	NC	AC5JH
KC2AIO	Bob	4071	NJ	AA0XJ
N8FIZ	Jim	4072	MI	N8WPX
N3CEU	John	4073	MD	WA0RSX
WA7OR	Owen	4074	WA	W6DDB
AA9DF	Charles	4075	MN	KC5VU
W0VHV	John	4076	CA	AC6TO
KY8X	Joe	4077	MI	
NK6X	Bill	4078	CA	KI0HQ
N6JO	Joseph	4079	CA	
KB0VSN	Ray	4080	MN	N4ZMP
W2FX	Leonard	4081	NY	W2LOB
KD4HRT	Doug	4082	FL	WB0CFX
W3DCN	Fred	4083	MD	W3JIM
K8NWD	Tim	4084	MI	WZ8C
KM5GS	Mike	4085	MS	KE4UYS
W9MVB	Ben	4086	AZ	WB2FXK
W9WQ	Bruce	4087	MI	
KF4SLZ	Becky	4088	MI	KF4KUO
KA4GAV	Bill	4089	WA	
W6RTO	Red	4090	AZ	AC6TO
N2IMO	Edwin	4091	NY	KB2BWO
N7MMN	Newell	4092	WA	KT4YY
N1YOK	Oscar	4093	NH	
KC0ALB	Zach	4094	IA	AA0XJ
W2LID	D.J.	4095	NJ	
KA9YCB	George	4096	IL	WA4KQL
KB8PGW	John	4097	MI	
W7JED	Jed	4098	WA	N6RNP
KN6WW	Chuck	4099	CA	
KF4GNV	Ron	4100	TN	K4VIZ
KF4SXG	Bill	4101	AL	
W7GHQ	Glen	4102	WA	N7WO
W0JL	Carl	4103	MN	KC5VJU
K0HFK	Bill	4104	ND	KE1AF
KE4KZV	Joe	4105	FL	KA1RVV
N8JG	Jim	4106	MI	N8HG
AC6VN	Harm	4107	CA	W6TPE

### Corrections

Robert, whose article is on the last page of Issue 10, should be **KB7AQD**, not **KB8AQD**.

### Callsign Changes

**KO0X**, Don, 3035, is now **W0DT**  
**KC7RHM**, Joe, 2717, is now **KK7KI**  
**WA5UNY**, Alex, 3304 is now **W5ALX**  
**KG0TH**, Nemo, 3550, is now **N0IC**  
**KF8AK** Mick, 3060, is now **W8MMM**  
**N3EYM**, Bill, 0655 is now **KW3JF**  
**WA1UQZ**, Ron, 3099, is now **W1AAE**  
**KG2JB**, Marty, 3841, is now **WN2DX**  
**KC7FWZ**, Terry 3204 is now **K7ASU**

### Congratulations!

To Luther **KB8ZMU** on his upgrade to general class.  
 To Ray **KB8ZYY** for winning the Michigan Upper  
 Pennsula hamfest CW 5-40 wpm challenge. Ray won  
 a cash prize, a certificate and was still going strong  
 after 40 wpm!  
 To Chuck **WA8UCS** for passing his Extra written!  
 To Ron **W1AAE** on upgrading to Advanced!

### QSL Bureau

The QSL Bureau is in full swing now. In case  
 you haven't heard, Stan K4UK and the Franklin  
 County ARA have taken over the responsibility of  
 running the Bureau. Please keep some Self Addressed  
 Stamped Envelopes on file - the address is on the  
 inside cover of this newsletter. You will NOT receive  
 cards that you may have waiting unless there is a  
 SASE on file for you.

Here is a list of the individual members of the  
 Franklin Club who are running the Bureau. You may  
 want to keep it for future reference in case you need  
 to contact them about your cards or drop them a note  
 of appreciation for their efforts!

Buddy, W4YE -- Call Areas 1 & 7  
 Charlie, K4BSF -- Call Areas 2 & 0  
 Bill, W4PWA -- Call Areas 3 & 6  
 Stan, K4UK -- Call Area 4 & Canada & DX  
 Frank, KE4HOA -- Call Areas 5 & 9  
 Gene, K4TSU -- Call Area 8

Their Email addresses are:

Buddy - W4ye@aol.com  
 Charlie - K4BSF@worldnet.att.net  
 Frank - ke4hoa@juno.com  
 Stan - stanreas@rev.net

Stan sorts the cards/SASEs in to Call Areas as they  
 come in and distributes them to the proper person.  
**Please remember to sort your cards by call area,**  
**then by alphabetical order.** It speeds up the process  
 tremendously. Thank You!

### QRP With John Shannon K3WWP

This month I want to share with you a letter I received from John, VE6ZAA about his QRP operation. It was a long and fascinating letter, and I wish I could share it all with you, but I don't have the room here. Then as space permits, some thoughts about QRP and the start of the new sunspot cycle.

John writes: "I had planned my participation in the QRP to the Field contest, sponsored by the Northern California QRP Club, to be a one-man setup and had previously scouted around and dismissed one site in the foothills as too far away at 50 km.

After rejecting another potential site 5 km from home in Calgary as unsuitable, I ended up down a dirt road in a wet stubble field with no heavy trees, just barely inside the city.

I went out on the Friday, April 26, and set up a triple dipole, one end over a poplar tree and the other fixed to a 30 ft. mast with five guy wires. I had used this antenna successfully before but I operated it on 40 metres only this time with an SWR of 1.1:1.

I had planned to sleep over but decided it was going to be too cold. I arrived on the site at 7:15 a.m. Saturday morning after hearing at 6 a.m. that it was -2 degrees C.

I connected the CW keyboard, antenna and battery for 4 watts to my ICOM 725. The wind started from the northwest and later shifted to the southeast, blowing right on me sitting on the rear bumper of my station wagon. This made for a cool morning, but typing was easier than using a keyer.

I got my first QSO at 8 a.m. with New Mexico, followed by others, until the band went quiet at 11:20 a.m. I made a total of 22 QRP contacts from the field. I clearly missed the boat by not having 20 metres working.

After arriving home, I set up the rig at 4 watts at 3 p.m. and made a further 15 contacts on 20 metres - not officially counted for the contest but at least it gave other QRP stations a contact. The contest ended at 6 p.m. local time.

I even worked a local, Rick, VE6GK, who was on with his QRP rig, probably at lower power than me, but he was booming in when I heard him a couple of other times in the morning and I finally worked him from home.

This was my first contest in many years, but it was great, even with the cool weather. I kept thinking how it would have been in California at 70 degrees F!

In my remarks to the organizers, I suggested that the next contest be held at the end of June!"

That's John's story of his QRP contest experience. He also writes, "I joined FISTS last February and

enjoy of hearing others doing QRP. When I hear a CQ QRP I turn down the ICOM 725+ to 5 watts and reply - often getting a comeback. When they don't I imagine they are in a noisy location, which mine, though in the big city, is not due to power underground and a bare 20 acres south of me. I rarely say 73 first and even with QSB I manage to get enough to make a sentence up - In commercial work we were used to summer static, etc., and didn't give it much thought unless it was a close storm."

John continues, "Did you know of the QRP op in Hilo, HI? He is using an Argonaut at 2 watts with power from battery and solar - He has told me he has a 600 foot V antenna (or unterminated rhombic) and runs a 2 watt output. This fall I've been lucky and worked him 3 times on 14060, but he quits as soon as the pileup gets tough."

Thanks to John for the fascinating info. I hope that more of you will write me with your thoughts and QRP experiences. I'd especially like to hear of your most memorable QRP QSO. I'll tell you mine next month.

As the new sunspot cycle is starting up and the solar flux climbs into the 90's and low 100's, the higher bands are starting to open up again. This is a great time to sneak in there and pick up some choice DX. Many casual operators either haven't discovered that the bands are opening up again or simply are waiting till they get still better. My point is - get on 15, 12, and 10 meters NOW! The DX is there, and the pileups are not that big. We QRPers can work it easily now without the competition that will come as conditions get still better. I have been working a lot of good DX on 15M - my total there is now 81 countries. I've worked a few new countries on 12 and 10 also - nothing spectacular, but still new for me. I have found that 15M is best here around 1400Z to EU, and 12/10M have been good to Latin and South America around 2100Z. That will vary from place to place, and you can quickly learn the pattern for your QTH.

Also, propagation conditions are likely to continue to improve dramatically over the winter and spring months. Now, before the weather gets too bad would be a good time to check those antenna connections and do any other outside maintenance before the snow, ice, and cold comes. Of course those of you in Florida, California, etc. have no idea what I'm talking about. HI.

Well, I'm out of space again. What would you like to see in this column? Write me at 478 E. High St., Kittanning, PA 16201-1304. Did you know that 30 to signify the end of a column is didididahdit dat in American Morse? Sound familiar? -30-

## Dayton Hamvention News

From all indications, this is going to be a very full and fun weekend for FISTS at the Hamvention! I mailed in our application for our booth. I am hoping The Powers That Be are looking out for us and we are fortunate to receive a booth again this year and it will be at the same location as the last few years.

Pete K8QUA has offered to take care of arrangements for reserving a room in the Windows Lounge in what used to be Stouffers - it's now the Crowne Plaza - on Friday night. I know, I know, this is the same night as the QRP dinner, but there is something going on every night in Dayton and there are only two nights to choose from. We've had the FISTS gathering on Friday night every year and the QRP dinner used to be Saturday. THEY are the ones who changed the schedule, so don't complain to me about it please!

We have a group of eight FISTS coming out from the Cowlitz Washington group! I haven't heard if Geo or any of the British contingent are coming yet.

Charlie KA8OUF is in charge of the Special Event Station again this year. He sent the following exciting announcement for publication in the Keynote. I hope there are a lot of FISTS who take him up on this. There are enough helpers at the FISTS booth now, that I may even be able to participate!

The following is the announcement that will be printed in the mailers for the 1998 Dayton Hamvention:

Special Event Station W8BI/8 will again operate from the Hamvention Flea Market. The Station will be open to the public during Flea Market hours. Those who upgrade at a Hamvention testing session are especially invited to stop by and use their new privileges.

W8BI/8 will be operating in the General and Novice phone and CW portions of the 40 and 20 meter bands to allow as many as possible to be with us in spirit.

W8BI/8 QSL's Hams and SWL's 100%. To Qsl, send a business-size self-addressed stamped envelope to:

W8BI/8

P.O. Box 44

Dayton OH 45401-0044

or QSL via the Bureau.

End of Announcement, Beginning of Commentary

Please note the change of bands - instead of running DC-to-Daylight, we're becoming more realistic and limiting our OFFICIAL OPEN HOURS operating to bands that will be productive (where we decide to go in the middle of the night is another story).

Over the years, the staff have discovered that we can't do it all by ourselves. This year, we're going to open it up to volunteer operators. Volunteers will: Be required to pull a four-hour shift (9am-1pm or 1pm-

5pm, Friday or Saturday) Of those 4 hours, 2 will be on phone, 2 on CW Of those 2 hours on CW, 1 hour will be in the General portion and 1 hour will be in the Novice portion of a band. THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE CARVED IN STONE!!!

Preference toward volunteers will be given:

To 5wpm class licensees; To teams of two 13 or more wpm operators; To TEAMS of a 13 or more wpm and 5wpm operator (each gets one hour each of each mode while the other logs)

Now the big enticement: at the November Hamvention Committee Meeting, I ran the volunteer scenario past the General Chairman, specifically noting that I'd like to make the request of groups other than just the membership of DARA in the local area. He agreed. After some deep and concentrated soul-searching (which took all of .0172 seconds), I've decided to open this offer to members of FISTS. A volunteer who works a four-hour shift at Hamvention gets in free! How will we work this part?

Just go ahead and buy your ticket like you normally do. After your shift, arrangements will be made to refund your admission ticket price IN CASH (if at all possible, that day at Hamvention). That way, we make sure ya actually pulled them there 4 hour shifts.

Now, if you want in on this, it's all up to you. Find a 5/13 or more wpm buddy who's coming and work it all out with them (I ain't spending two weeks trying to match up the world...). Or take your chances and volunteer to work solo.

Your volunteer letter must be postmarked AFTER January 1. I'm just going to start opening them as they come in. You can request a particular shift (9am-1pm and 1pm-5pm Friday and Saturday - Sunday is our day to play a bit and tear down).

Your letter must include:

NAME AND CALL

FULL MAILING ADDRESS

FULL TELEPHONE NUMBER

All of the above is so I can reach you and tell you what's going on and when to be where.

Send your letter to:

CHARLIE COTTERMAN KA8OQF

26 MELLO AVENUE

DAYTON OH 45410-2119

NO phone call volunteers will be accepted - in writing only!

Fellow FISTS, this is for real. The Hamvention General Chairman has approved the entire deal, and left it up to me to set it up. My mailbox awaits after the New Year.

Charlie Cotterman KA8OQF FISTS #1478 Chairman, Hamvention Special Event Station W8BI/8

## The Traffic Hound by Pete, K8OUA

Christmas is a big time for traffic handlers. What a great way to receive Christmas greetings! The phone rings, the recipient picks it up, a strange voice tells them that he (she!?) is an amateur radio operator and has a message for them from someone they know. Then, to receive those words of Christmas greeting! What a great thrill it is, especially if it's from someone they haven't heard from for awhile. It's more personal because it's a real live human voice on the other end of the phone. Not a computer, not a typed email message, not machine-made card, but a real human voice! Maybe I'm just old fashioned, but I believe that receiving a greeting from a friend relayed by a real person is a bit more special than reading about it on my computer. What's my point?? Well, why not check into a traffic net and send some of your Christmas greetings via ham radio traffic nets. You'll like it, the hams handling the traffic will like it, and so will the person you're sending it to. If you've never done it, try it and see what the response is. Then, let me know!

I read World Radio every month, and Geri Sweeney's (N4GHI) column, "Traffic", is one of the first things I turn to. (*WHAT?? You don't read my Positively CW column first?? says Nancy*) Geri's column includes lots of interesting traffic related stuff.

Geri estimates that there are about 5000 traffic handling hams in the US and Canada. If her figure is accurate, that means that only 2.5% of all active hams ever handle traffic. I wonder why? I suspect that some hams don't even know that there is such a thing as a traffic handling system. Others might know about it, but feel that it is too difficult or complicated to pursue. Others don't want to be tied down by a schedule of having to be on the air at a certain time on a certain day to handle traffic. I have relatives who consider that the only TRUE activity of an amateur radio operator is to work DX. (Yeah, right, like sending your callsign over and over into a pile of noise is the ultimate in ham radio enjoyment!) Whatever the reason, the majority of US and Canadian hams have never experienced the thrill of receiving, sending or delivering their first message.

How do we get more people interested in handling traffic, whether it's by Morse, SSB, RTTY, or by packet? If you're looking for an answer here, you'll be disappointed. I have no answers, except to keep suggesting to the 97.5% of hams who don't handle traffic that they really are missing something neat and special. If you're too nervous to just get on any net and try it out, why not try it out with your soulmates -- FISTS! Just tune the rig to 3.682 MHz (+ or - for QRM) every Tuesday and Thursday evening at 9.00

PM Eastern time, and QNI (check in) the FISTS Slow Net. You will be sincerely welcomed, treated gently and with patience, and, if you do it often enough, you'll learn to handle traffic. We expect you to make mistakes, and make every effort to help you through them.

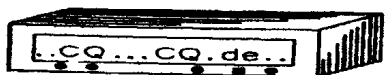
Now, for some special 'thank yous' -- first, as usual, to Arnie, **KT4ST**, for taking the net so often over the past months. There have been many times when I just could not be there and it's been great to know that Arnie has been. A big 'thank you' also to George, **KG8DA**, who stepped in and took the net recently when I was somewhere on the road between Cleveland and Warren. If neither nor Arnie show up, I'd welcome any one of you who are experienced traffic handlers to do exactly that, don't let the net just crash! If you do act as NCS, please send me a radiogram with a report for my statistics. If you would like to serve as Net Control on a regular basis with Arnie and me, please send me a radiogram and let me know which night(s) you'd like to take the net and how I can reach you. You'll be welcomed in with open arms. Finally, a big 'thanks' to Dave, **VE7DWG** from North Vancouver, who has been sending me info on west coast slow speed CW traffic nets. Dave does it the best way, he sends me radiograms. According to Dave, those of you on the west coast might want to try out these nets -- the British Columbia Emergency Traffic Net on 3652 KHz at 7.00 PM local Pacific time with a maximum speed of 15 WPM; the Washington State Traffic net on 3590 KHz at 6.45 and 9.45 PM local Pacific time with a maximum speed of 12 to 18 WPM. In California try these slow nets -- 3598 KHz at 7.15 PM local time, and 3705 KHz at 9.00 PM local time. Meanwhile, for those of you in the East, try these (thanks to Geri, N4GHI in her World Radio article) - CSN (NC/SC) 3715 at 6 PM; FSN (FL) 3715 at 8 PM; MSN (MD) 3717 at 7.30 PM; EMRI (MA/RI) 3715 at 9 PM; MSSN (ME) 3685 at 6.10 PM; NJSN (NJ) 3515 at 6.30 PM; ES (NY) 3590 at 6 PM; OSN (OH) 3708 at 6.10 PM; PTTN (PA) 3610 at 6.30 PM. Try 'em out -- support your nets, without you and your traffic, they will not succeed, but with you and your traffic they can go on forever. Get a life, enjoy yourself, do something that you'll not only enjoy, but that is actually GOOD for the world -- become a traffic hound!

Finally, thanks to all of you who have sent me radiograms about these articles. It's great to know that someone actually reads them, and that many of you actually like them!! Makes my hat size increase, HI. May your Lord bless you in the way that helps you the most.

Luk fer u on the nets, ARE, es 73, Pete K8OUA



## Activity Information



### West Coast Code Buddy Needed

Ed **WA3WSJ**, our Code Buddy Coordinator, has several FISTS on the West coast who need a Code Buddy to help them with on the air practice. If you can help out pse contact Ed Email at [breneiser@talon.net](mailto:breneiser@talon.net) or via postal mail at the address on the inside cover of this issue.

### Pacific Coast Net

Ken **W6NKE** would like to invite FISTS to join the Pacific Coast Net (PCN). It meets daily on 7/045 kHz at 11 AM PST. The purpose of the net is to exchange local weather reports, visit a bit with old friends and make new ones. CW speed vary from very slow to around 18 wpm. Speed vary to accommodate the slower operators. Mistakes are common and nothing to be ashamed of. Bill **W6COS** is the net manager and usually the Net Control Op (NCS). He is welcomes the participation of FISTS members.

### Tennessee Slow Net

The Tennessee Slow Net meets on the same frequency as the FISTS Slow Net, 3.682, Monday thru Friday. It meets a half hour before the FISTS net, which would make it 8:30 Eastern time if my calculations are correct. Willard **W4HZD** is one of the Net Control Stations (NCS) and invites all to stop in and say hello. So, turn on the rig a little earlier than you usually would on the nights you join the FISTS net and join the fun!

### Two Meter CW Practice Net

Joe **AA1KF** has started an interactive CW Practice Net (listed in the ARRL net directory) on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 on 2 meters. They average about 10-12 check-ins -Joe sends code at 5/13/20 wpm and then asks stations what they copied. It's fun, challenging and new and old CW buffs join in. That sounds like a fun idea, and anyone could start up the same type of thing on their local repeaters! Let me know if you try it and how it goes.

## Cowlitz Club Elections

The Cowlitz FISTS ARC has a change of officers. Congrats to new President Stu **K7WF**, new Sec/Treas Brian, **KJ7OX** and QSL manager Ed **N7CFA**. We're looking forward to seeing EIGHT of the Cowlitz FISTS in Dayton!

### Thoughts on Century Award NCS?

As far as I know, we're still looking for Net Control Stations to take the Sunday Century Award Net. Al, **W8FAX** suggests we have a revolving net control plan, with a volunteer taking one day a month rather than having to be stuck EVERY Sunday -- any comments or volunteers??

### FISTS Special Event

Just about all the Commemorative QSL Cards are gone, I hope those who requested them enjoy them! If you asked me for some and don't have them yet, pse let me know because it means I misplaced your request. Thanks to **WX9X** for the terrific deal on the cards and to all those who sent in extra with your subscriptions so we could afford to buy them and offer them to the members.

If you haven't sent in your log yet, please do so. It wasn't a contest, per se, but it is fun to see who got on the air! I am forwarding the logs to our Contest Manager Gary **N8HA** (not to be confused with the Sprint manager Tom) and he will make a list of participants and the number of stations worked, which I will put in the Keynote at a later date.

### FISTS Novice Round-Up

FISTS will be sponsoring the Novice Round-Up next year. It's Valentine's Day weekend - from Friday thru Monday. With the limited activity this contest brings, it doesn't really make sense to stretch it out for a week. Plus it follows on the heels of the School RoundUp which ends Feb 13, so some of the Novice/Tech will have the opportunity to work a weeks worth of events just for them anyway.

Details will follow in later Keynotes and the major magazines. Talk it up at your local club. Offer to open your station to a Novice/Tech who might not have HF gear at home. It's a great chance to be an Elmer - it's a good feeling!



## R U a Thumb or Finger Ditter?

This question asked by Art **W8PBO** in last month's KeyNote piqued the curiosity of quite a few FISTS and other CW ops.

Bill **W8FYO** posted the question in an Email CW reflector [a reflector is a round-table discussion group of people with similar interests. The Email messages are sent to each person on the mailing list, everyone can read and comment on the various topics] He will tabulate the results and share them with us next month. If you'd like to participate in the survey, Bill's Email address is [norton@erinet.com](mailto:norton@erinet.com) Postal mail address is: Bill Norton, 3817 Marion Dr, Enon OH 45323.

Text of post to CW reflector:

Comments by **W8PBO** in the 10/97 issue of The Keynote (the FISTS CW Club newsletter) raised an interesting question. He found that half the members at a ham club meeting set up their keyer paddles in the "nonstandard" configuration so that the thumb creates the dahs instead of the dits as is standard on most bugs. As a left-hander, I learned on a right-handed bug and carried the FingerDit habit into my keyer use.

As I try to relearn bug sending with the left hand while switching to the right hand for the keyer, I find that the brain-to-fist connection forces me to use both thumbs for dahs, otherwise chaos reigns. If some of you keyer (and bug) users are curious about this also, please send me answers to the following questions.

1. Are you are a FingerDitter or a ThumbDitter?
2. Why?
3. Do you send with the left or right hand?
4. If you are a southpaw, do you use a left-handed bug?
5. Do you write or log with the other hand?
6. Do you send on both bugs AND keyers?
7. If so, how do you switch between the two (such as a different one for each fist)? from Bill **W8FYO**

From Rick **W19S**:

Just read the column about "thumb dits" "Finger dits?" Does it really matter? That's what I was told by my Elmers (Notice the S on Elmers?) The only reason for a "Standard" would be for shared op's at say, field day or something. Whatever you're comfortable with is just fine! It all depends on how a person learns it, just as with a straight key. (Poor example I guess.) Anyway, I was told Thumb Dits so that's how I learned and it works fine for me. Until now I didn't know there was a right or wrong way to use paddles....did you? There is about a 80/20 thumb dits in our club, and it bothers them when we (the 80) say "Hey...are you left handed?" : ) Oh well, guess you get my drift.

## Don't Forget Us Lefties

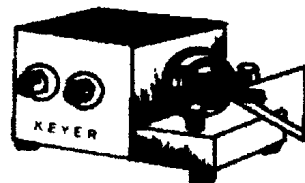
by Jim **KC8BAA** [kc8baa@glasscity.net](mailto:kc8baa@glasscity.net)

I read Art's (**W8PBO**) article, "Finger or Thumb Dits?" with interest. While I was taught that DITS are sent with the thumb, what happens when us lefties send DITS with our thumbs? To our right-handed friends, our keyers appear to be set up to send DITS with their thumbs.

Art is correct that keyers do not come with instructions about which side to put the DITS and DAHS. But be assured like most other things in this world, keyers come from the factory set for "righties" (to send DITS with their thumb). I had to modify mine to suit my left-handedness.

Setting a standard of sending DITS with the thumb, as Art proposes, might be a noble goal if everyone were right-handed. Everyone knows that those who prefer CW are of above average intelligence and ability, the hallmark of left-handers.

I've heard of a left-handed bug, but never seen one. Any other lefties care to comment?



From Randy **K8EZ**: Whether a person does it one way or another is irrelevant. However, since the subject has surfaced, I would like to add that use of the thumb for dahs and the finger (I use my index finger) for dits makes more sense because the dah is a longer, more dominant sound as is the thumb a more dominant digit. And, since CW ops tend to be mostly dominating personalities, it seems only proper to use the dominant digit for denser dominating decibels and the diminutive digit for de dits.

More from Bill **W8FYO**: When I got my first bug in 1976 I simply used it the way it came. HOWEVER, I am a natural left-hander for most activities and sent with my left hand, thus reversing the "normal" bug pattern. By the time I realized there were left-handed bugs and started adding them to the collection, I found them awkward to use. It was too late to change. When I started using keyers, the habit was too strong.

Considering that nearly 1 of 5 Americans--and probably hams--are left handed, the "nonstandard" method is likely to be used, even if the operator knew how a bug is set up. But since most keyer user now probably have never used a bug, the decision is a crap shoot unless he or she was coached by an Elmer.

## Setting Up On A Budget

by James A. Brown K5JAZ

I have a dipole for 40/20/15, a vertical for 17-10, and a delta loop for 40-10, covering all the bands I work. I have excellent performance on 40-10 from at least one of these antennas to match the type of operating I am doing at any given time. My favorite antenna of all of these is the delta loop. It's at least a couple of S units quieter than the others, and really reaches out for the DX.

I live in tornado-alley. This summer we had storm after thunderstorm with very high winds. One of those storms brought down my beloved delta loop. Upon examining the remains of the tie-ropes, it appeared that the local squirrel population likes nylon rope almost as much as the pecans I feed them. The winds came, the trees moved, the bungee cords stretched, and the upper tie-rope snapped. What a mess! I regretfully clipped the wire of the loop, pulled it over the dipole, rolled it lovingly into a coil and gave it an honorable spot in my shack. With its demise, I lost DX coverage on 40, 30, and to a lesser degree, 20 meters and no chance of working 80 at all. I had to fill that gap with something that wasn't at the mercy of the winds.

I was intrigued by a ground mounted, no radial vertical antenna made by GAP Antenna Products, Inc. of Vero Beach, FL (561-778-3728). I visited their website (search GAP antenna) and got the lowdown on the patented technology they use, and believe me, it is very different from other vertical antennas. I decided to try the Titan model. It has the widest band coverage of any of their models, covering 80-10 meters, including WARC (100Khz on 80, full coverage on all others) with an SWR bandwidth of under 2:1 across all bands. I called and discussed the antenna with them and requested an instruction manual (there had to be a catch!). I examined the manual thoroughly and my to my wife's dismay, sent them \$300 for the antenna and \$18 for shipping. It arrived a few days later and I was faced with a bewildering array of aluminum tubing and stainless-steel hardware. GAP states in their manual that the assembly time is about 1 hour; don't you believe it. Including iced tea breaks, it took me about four hours to put it together, marveling at the size of it each step of the way.

This antenna is 25 feet tall and weighs in at 25 pounds. It is very well constructed and certainly will outlive me. Instead of traps, it uses several tuning rods surrounding the main mast to achieve its all-band coverage. There is an 80 inch tuned loop at the base supported by four rods, much like the element of a

quad antenna. This loop is tuned for lowest SWR on 40 meters. The coax feed travels up through the lower mast section to an insulator that divides the center mast section in approximately half (sound like a dipole?). I have absolutely no idea how this magnificent piece of hardware works, but it works well.

I mounted my Titan according to the instructions in the manual. I purchased a 10' x 1.25" galvanized steel conduit (\$6), a 10' length of schedule 40 PVC pipe that just slid over the conduit (\$3), and two bags of quick-dry post cement (\$13). The cement was expensive, but very easy to use -- no mixing, no fuss. I dug a three-foot deep post hole in the exact center of my jungle (ever do manual labor in 100 degree heat?). I then plumbed the PVC in the hole and used my wife to secure it while I emptied the cement bags into the hole. *(I hope that just means she held the PVC for you jim!)* I filled the hole up to the top with water, waited the required five minutes, and the job was done. I cut the PVC pipe off level with the ground, leaving a 1.25" hole for the conduit mast to slide into.

I bolted the assembled antenna to the conduit mast, stood the whole thing upright and picked it up and carried it to the hole while my wife, daughter, and a neighbor held onto the guy ropes to keep it upright. It slid easily into place. I then assembled the counterpoise to the base of the antenna and tied off the guy lines. GAP says the antenna is self-supporting in "substantial" winds, but recommend guying for insurance. I recommend guying this thing in place. Period. In my installation it has already survived winds in excess of 70 miles per hour and it would not have survived except for the guy lines.

Tuning the antenna for 40 meters was a snap. I attached my Autek Research RF-1 analyt to the feed protruding from the base of the antenna and followed the ample instructions in the manual. I adjusted the length of the wire loop until the SWR was minimum at mid-band. This resulted in less than 2:1 SWR across the entire 40 meter band. I took careful measurements on all bands and confirmed that the SWR was less than 2:1 across each band. On 80 meters, the 2:1 SWR range covered 130Khz instead of the advertised 100Khz. Incidentally, you must specify where you want the antenna to resonate on 80 at the time you place the order. I specified the CW DX window, and they were right on the money.

I connected RG8X coax with a female-to-female adapter I picked up at Radio Shack, covered the connection with coax seal and hooked the antenna up to my transceiver through an Autek Research WM-1 computing SWR meter. I put a signal on the air on all of the bands and recorded the results. Here is the sur-

prise -- the WM-1 measured lower SWR than I recorded at the antenna with the RF-1. I thought maybe I had a problem with the WM-1, so I hooked the antenna up to the RF-1 in the shack. Sure enough, the SWR on all bands were lower than I had measured at the antenna. I don't know why, and really don't care, but I suppose the presence of my iced-tea saturated body near the antenna was the cause. All I know is that this antenna provides me all band coverage and my SWR meter never moves above 1.3:1 on any band above 80 meters! The 80 meter 2:1 SWR range is a whopping 150Khz. The SWR is so low as to be absolutely insignificant.

Using this antenna has been a pure delight. The performance has equaled, if not surpassed, the delta loop. Since there is no tuner to fiddle with, band changes are a snap. GAP does not publish gain figures or radiation patterns for their antennas. I was really skeptical of this at first, so I asked them to estimate the 20 meter take-off angle of the Titan. They stated at the major lobe is approximately 12 to 17

degrees. My observations conclude that this is probably true. It appears to have excellent low-angle take-off since strong 40 and 20 meter US signals are several S-units down on the Titan when compared to the dipole. The only real problem I have is that California signals eat my lunch in the early evening hours on 20 when I'm trying to work DX. I worked a KL7 for the first time using the GAP; a feat I have not accomplished before. European contacts are returning reports superior to those from the delta loop. Using high power allows me to even beat the big guns in pileups. And here is the bonus -- this antenna is very quiet. My S9 interference is now down one or two S-units from the delta loop!

Armed with this arsenal of three antennas, I am now DX-capable 80-10 meters, and ragchew-capable on 40 and 20. These antennas fit my available space, were within my budget, and I use them constantly. Next month, I will begin to explain how I eliminated the remaining interference at my hostile location, but right now I hear CQ on 7058....

Nancy, In the last KeyNote I enjoyed the article by James A. Brown about "Setting Up On Budget". He talked mostly about his dipole antenna fed with RG58 coax. Nice article Jim, thanks!

I simply wanted to add that there are, as Jim suggested, some reasons for pruning and tuning a dipole for a given frequency. Jim uses rigs with tube finals and doesn't have to worry about reasonable SWR's, 4:1 or less, perhaps even higher? But those of us with transistor final rigs, with fold-back circuitry do need to lower that SWR. At the home QTH I do it with an ATU (Antenna Tuning Unit).

When I go into the field with a QRP rig, I tune the antenna for the band I want to work so I don't need to take an ATU along.

Last, the SWR does matter just a bit when using coax because there is a loss associated with each pass along the coax.

An example might help understand this. I'll select 40 meters, SWR 4:1 and RG58 coax with a loss of about -1.2 dB/100', so for Jim's case about -0.6 dB loss per pass. The final output power from Jim's antenna is about: 72% (Also, if Jim measured an SWR of 4:1 at the end of his -0.6 dB coax, the SWR at the antenna is really 5.4:1 and so I used that SWR, not the 4:1).

While we may not worry too much about this when running 100 W, or more, I do worry about it when running QRP levels. However, like Jim I do the 85%

and don't worry about the higher cost, 15% better antenna.

As Jim noted however, his SWR will go up when using a 40 meter dipole on the other bands. In some cases rather substantially.

It is all a trade-off, I can use twin-lead and have a loss of -0.04 dB but then I need an ATU, or I can use coax with a loss of -1.2 dB and tune it so I don't need an ATU. (Don't forget that there is loss in an ATU.)

At home, since I use an ATU anyway, the next dipole I put up will be fed with twin-lead.

Jim's setup using twin-lead would have a final output power of about 98% (assuming an SWR of about 7:1 - 450ohm:72ohm, and no loss in an ATU.)

A last note, the SWR 2:1 bandwidth of Jim's antenna at 40 meters using 14 gauge wire is: 394 Khz. More than enough for almost the entire 40 meter band! If he is only interested in the CW portion, his SWR will be well below 2:1 even at the ends.

All these numbers have been derived using the program POUT.EXE by KE3FL - me, :) with equations listed in ARRL publications such as the Antenna book, or the ARRL Handbook. The bandwidth algorithms were derived by L. B. Cebik, W4RNL.

I hope this helps others understand the pros & cons of using a basic antenna system.

I may be contacted at: ke3fl@juno.com  
73 de KE3FL Phil Karras

## Product Announcements

I don't accept paid advertising in the KeyNote, but I do like to help out ham related FISTS owned businesses, particularly when they offer a discount to their fellow FISTS members. If you inquire about anything you see in the KeyNote, be sure to tell them where you heard about their stuff and that you are also a FISTS member!

### FISTS/Ham Radio Return Address Labels

Roy **W5RJ**, #3137 makes return address labels with color FISTS or ham radio related logos with your unlimited choice of fonts. Tell him what you would like and he can probably make it for you! e-mail: [w5rj@texas.net](mailto:w5rj@texas.net) landline: 210-543-9442. address good in callbook.

#### Solder-It Co.

**FISTS MEMBERS** - Use this as a \$5.00 coupon to purchase the Solder-It Kit OR Free Shipping on any product ordered from our web site  
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### FISTS Presentation Gets Rave Reviews!

"Got the transparencies mailed yesterday. The Presentation was easy to make and was effective. I hope we get some new members from this....and once again thanks for the help you gave me." 73 de **KC5DRH**

Is your club looking for a presentation to do at a meeting? Why not consider doing a presentation about FISTS? Randy **K8EZ** has made a kit including a terrific set of transparencies with a written script. All you have to do is flip the transparencies and read! I'll supply some sample newsletters and brochures (everybody likes freebies, hi) If you're interested, contact Randy at the address on the inside cover.

## PhotoPages

The photopages winner this month is #3312, Tom **W1TP**. Tom wins a FISTS cloth patch and stickers just for sending in his photo for the photopages! You have a chance to win every month in our computer generated drawing. All you have to do is send in your photograph.

I finally have the photopages reprinted and am in the process of sending them out to the FISTS who haven't gotten their copies yet. After I get caught up with that, THEN I'm going to work on making the certificates. So please be patient. It's taking me a while, but the stuff IS getting done. When you see the list of new FISTS each month, I hope it gives you a clue as to how much paperwork I am dealing with.

I didn't send a letter of explanation along with the photopages I've mailed out, so if you are a relatively new FISTS member and got a set of photographs in the mail recently in a big white envelope - those are your fellow FISTS!

### USA Bureau Closes

Thanks to Bud **WA2BQI** for sending along this notice for your information: The USA QSL Bureau has closed due to the general lack of interest and sharp increase in those telling us they have absolutely no interest in a domestic QSL bureau. All cards held in house will be forwarded or returned.... Thank you for your support over the last 20 months.

### A-1 Operators Club

Apparently the A-1 Operators Club is still going strong. In response to last month's inquiry about it, I received a note from Willard **W4HZD** who tells me that he just received the award in the mail a few weeks ago. He and a friend have already nominated two hams, and they've received their awards. From what Willard's observed, the recent members seem to be very active traffic handlers.

### WANTED

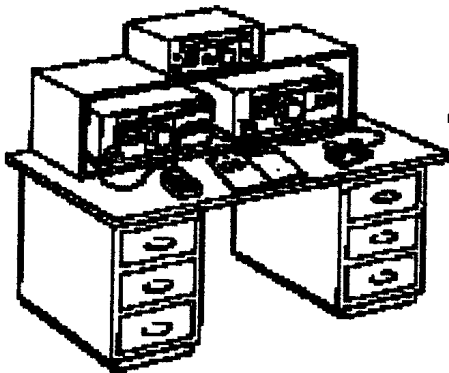
MERCURY KEY BY  
STEVE NURKIEWCZ N2DAN  
PSE CONTACT BOB N9MU  
847-945-5345  
EMAIL [TOTAKIA@AOL.COM](mailto:TOTAKIA@AOL.COM)

## News and Views From FISTS Members

### Pet Peeves

It's always a treat to get a letter from Alan **N6RNP**. If you've ever gotten a QSL or note from him, you'll know what I'm talking about. He **draws the most charming art work** on his envelopes! Alan is 60 years old and been a ham for 10 years. He's noticed for the last 3 or 4 years that the majority of hams on 40/80 meter Novice bands are using "RRR" incorrectly. Alan thinks they just hear others using it so they think they should use it too. For example, after Alan transmits, the other guy sends RRR then proceeds to ask Alan to repeat his question, or asks for a repeat because he missed something. Another thing that gets to Alan is the guy who uses "SK SK SK" to turn it back over.

The best way to "educate" the new ops is to get on the air and set a good example. There are bound to be people that use procedural signs improperly, or the "wrong" abbreviations, so try and be tolerant! Maybe drop the hams a courteous note and include a xerox of the procedural signs from the ARRL handbook. None of us is perfect - I would hate to think that every op I contact is scrutinizing my code for mistakes. But I do agree that if someone is using "R" (which means received correctly and in full) and then asks for a repeat, they should be informed as to the proper use of it.



You may be familiar with the award that Bill Welsh of CQ Magazine offers for working someone in each of the 10 call districts. He also offers the award with an endorsement for working a FISTS member in all 10 districts. Send your list of contacts showing station callsign, FISTS number, date, time, mode and band or frequency, validated by an elected official of a ham club and two other licensed hams, along with \$2 (for US, Canada and Mexican hams) to Bill Welsh **W6DDB**, 45527 3rd Street East, Lancaster CA 93535-1802. Do not send QSL cards.

The DX FISTS are looking for us! Dave **G0DJA**, #1372, sent me this Email: I worked **AA1KC**, Lon - member No. 2022 the other day on 20M whilst running 3 Watts so was pleased to work a fellow FISTS member from your side of the pond HI....

It's very gratifying to hear that FISTS CW Club has rejuvenated your interest in ham radio! Here are some "testimonials":

"Since I joined Fists my interest in ham radio perked up agn. Took the Extra Class theory and to my surprise I passed it. Tnx for sponsoring me in Fists." Chuck **WA8UCS**

"Before I joined FISTS last year I had been off the air for a period of time longer than I wish to admit to, but since becoming a FISTS member I have been on the air on a regular basis, unless I am away somewhere. Enclosed pse find my renewal check, sign me up for another year." John **WB2EXT**

Finished reading the new Keynote today and found it very interesting as usual. Am particularly interested in the mention of the book being written by John McKinney. Any more info? I would definitely buy a copy. **TNX ES 73**, Dick, **K8UGL** FISTS 2172/C231 I haven't heard any more from Mac about his book, if I do, I'll certainly share the news!

Al **W8FAX** says he's ready for winter AGAIN. And finally got his tower up this summer (it's been a 35 year project!). It's up 60 feet with th-66dx tri band yagi.

Congrats to Marino, **N1PVP**, #1770, who recently became the first person in the United States, and only the twentieth person in the world to be awarded the Canadian Provinces GOLD award.

Marino earned his points entirely on CW, working mostly on the 40 meter band. For this award, which has a bronze, a silver, and the highest level, the gold, you earn points by contacting residents of the various Canadian provinces. The points per contact depends on the proximity of the province to your own QTH. Marino is on the air mostly in the early morning and late evenings from Carver MA. His wife is Cris, **AA1MU**, #1920.

From Dave **KC2AFK**: I want to let you know that while I had to pick one member to put on my mem-

bership application as sponsor (**WA3WEE**) I had received information about the organization from four others; **KA2KDJ**, **W8DEA**, **KB9GOX**, and **N4ZMP**. I also had to tell several others that I already had information on the club or that I had applied. FISTS seems to be quite an evangelical group. They all deserve credit for my decision to join. The chats with each were memorable and all were most considerate of my, minimal, CW skills. For what ever reason the club seems to have attracted the cream of the crop.

And from Joel **N7KOJ** I received a nice letter regarding "FISTS C.W. Club" from **K3CJQ** (Fist 2177). He sent it along with his QSL card. We had a very nice chat on the 7.125. I didn't have a sponsor when I joined FISTS and I'm not sure if matters, but I would like **K3CJQ** to get the credit. He is really talking up FISTS.

From Orin **N4ZMP**: My age is 57 and I have been a ham 7 years. I was in Leavenworth, IN and sent a QSL to Bill **KD4UBC**. It got to him with a FISTS gold logo sticker on it. I don't have any stickers, so we know there are a few FISTS in postal work. *That certainly is a mystery, Orin - guess we've got some FISTS elves in the Post Office!*

From Ron **W1AAE**: I volunteered to presort cards for the W1-bureau and the ARRL (I'm not a member because they pushed the no-code license). Over the past few months I bet I have sorted 30,000+ cards to go to the various QSL bureaus. Many of these are from Russia, Lithuania, Cuba, etc. **OVER 80% ARE FOR CW QSO'S!!!**

If CW is outdated, why so many QSL's for CW QSO's? Those who advocate the demise of the art of cw should get a life or get their General ticket. CW does not require one to be fluent in the language of the person to whom you are communicating. The Q signals and standard info exchange meet the basic requirements of passing information from one to another - and you have fun doing it.

After you work Chuck **KB2SWI** be sure to take a close look at his QSL card. He runs them off a homebrew letter press and they have a very nice unique look to them.

From Jim **K5JAZ**: It made me sad to read the bit from George, **W5RUK** about being a member for a year and has yet to work a fellow FISTS member. You can bet I'll be listening for him and hope others will do the same. There is no excuse for any of us (short of a power outage).

From Bob **N9MU**: Was a ham for 5 years and was only on phone lost all interest in the hobby. CW has brought the fun back and challenge. Though I am an extra I am most comfortable around 13-15wpm. Met the nicest people on CW. Having a heck of a time to get people in WV es KY to qst for my was cw. 5 contacts in each state sent sase, and my card but no luck. *I hope those contacts weren't FISTS, Bob! I think FISTS are the tops in QSLing. I know there are some waiting for my card, tho...isn't that terrible. Not enough time! I'll get to it sooner or later.*

From Bert **W4JTU**, in reference to the question asked by **WA7SNY** on page 14 of Issue 10 Keynote: What's TP? Are you pulling our leg?! You must know it means "To Potty" so make it an unofficial Q signal QTP, that is "Quit or Quick To Potty". *That's what I thought it meant too, but wasn't going to volunteer the info in case I was wrong, hi!*

From Ed **KE4TSS**: After reading two club newsletters, I decided to send in my subscription. FISTS seems to be a friendly club, and I want to become a member. Right now I only have CW transmitting capability on 7.100- 7.150 and the CW portion of 6 meters.

I passed my 5 wpm back in March and have made a few contacts on 40 meters. At this point, it seems that I can send much better than I can receive, so I'm not too encouraged. I do love the code and will bet better at it. I think that joining FISTS will help. *I'm sure it will Ed. It helps a lot to know that there is another FISTS member on the other side of the QSO. Contact Ed (info on inside cover of this issue) about getting a Code Buddy!*

Ron **N7RD** renewed his subs and notes that it's winter in the deserts of Phoenix now and time for him to get his antenna work done. Just backwards of where he used to live in Illinois!

Dick **WA8NNQ** sends in a note with his renewal, remarking it's easier to find a FISTS to QSO as the membership grows. Boy, it sure is. I remember when it used to be a Big Event to hear CQ FISTS, now the band is humming with us! That's wonderful, isn't it?

**CW: It's mind over mouth**



Bob **KA3ZXX** used a bug in the military, and says they used to call CW ops "ditty-dum-dum-ditty's" which was I-M-I used for "are you receiving me". For some nostalgia he sends along the old military phonetic alphabet (even tho we're a CW club and don't NEED phonetics, I'll print it just for fun!): Able Baker Charlie Dog Fox George How Item Jig King Love Mike Nan Oboe Peter Queen Roger Sugar Tare Uncle Victor William Xray Yoke Zebra.

Jim **W8FDV** is very happy with his **FISTS** number. His wife Sandra **KA8OUU** and he were married in 1959 and his **FISTS** number is 1959, so how can he ever forget it!

John **N5PRF** works 30 days on and 30 days off in Cameroon West Africa with the oil industry. He's trying to get his ticket over there but so far it's been slow going. He says it's a lot of paperwork and nothing moves very fast over there. Keep us posted John, I'm sure we'd all like to work you in Cameroon - not to imply we wouldn't be happy to work you while you're in Louisiana too, but you know what I mean!!

### A Classic Funny

This was submitted by Cheryl **KB0RQ** and Phil **AB2AU**. Cheryl has an interest in Ham antiques like spark gap contraptions, old mags, etc. She found this article in a 1951 QST magazine. EDITOR QST:

I have just received from the radio commission my renewed amateur radio license. I object to the indignity I have suffered. According to the terms of the surrender assepted by Pres. A. Lincoln no punitive measures was to be drawn up against us southern gentleman involuntarily demobilized from our military command on this here lisense howsomever there is some fine print on its backside which is entitled "conditions of grant". I would just like to know howcom generl grant is making conditions like these. It ain't so much the conditions themselves but we object to having generl grant cut in on our operations. Next time he will be wanting to impose a tax on working DX. Will you please investigate this here matter, and if necessary refer to the Pres. himself. I do not think general grant is supposed to have anything to do with Ham Radio. Least not here in the South. - Col. Ward Buhrman, **W4QT** Formerly Communications Officer Confederate Signal Corps 1951 QST

Phil estimates the authors' birthdate to be around 1853. He would have been about 12 years old at the end of the Civil War (1865) and in 1951 he would have been 98 years old. Phil notes that he just never thought of any Civil War Vets being radio hams!

The following is an excerpt from a column Joe **AA1KF** wrote for his local Central Maine newsletter. Hope you can find some good CW learning tips:

- 1) Go by sound - don't picture dots and dashes - react to dits and dahs.

- 2) Practice regularly - set aside at least two 15 minute practice times per day.

- 3) Don't over practice - there's a fine line here - don't cross it or you'll lose ground.

- 4) Don't anticipate characters.

- 5) Use a quiet setting in order to concentrate. Try headphones.

- 6) Sending will also help you receive.

- 7) Tapes - they all work if you use them - listen to learn.

- 8) Listen to operators on high frequency bands. A short wave rig with a BFO oscillator, even a portable, (under \$ 150.00) will work.

- 9) WIAW CW practice on 3.581 MHz daily schedule in QST - listen at two speeds (wpm) faster than your present copy speed.

- 10) After you pass the 5 wpm exam - get on the air.

- 11) Code tutors - size of a deck of cards fits in your pocket for practice anytime.

- 12) Find someone "in your boat" - send and receive using practice oscillators.

- 13) Record your own sending.

- 14) Tap Out road signs while driving.

- 15) If you miss a character, let it go, Eeny Meany Miney Moe!

- 16) Try to learn characters at a fast character pace. 'Farnsworth'!

- 17) As you pick up speed - let a couple characters go by - try to copy the word.

- 18) Stay away from CW when you are tired.

- 19) Set a reasonable goal -- this winter I'm going from 5 wpm to 20 wpm.

- 20) Barriers (10 wpm, etc.) are just plateaus. All you need is a push.

- 21) Spend more practice time on characters that are hard for you.

- 22) Don't avoid learning numbers, punctuation marks and pro-signs.

- 23) Copy and send characters as a single sound - not series of Dits and Dahs.

- 24) This is the most important one: If you need help - ASK FOR IT - CW operators have a strong bond. We've all been where you are. We love the code. Ours is really the last outpost for keeping Morse code alive. We want you to join us. We need you. You are joining the brotherhood of the code. We didn't memorize some prepared answers for a tests upgrade. We invested time and effort practicing to master the art of CW. Please be a part of it.

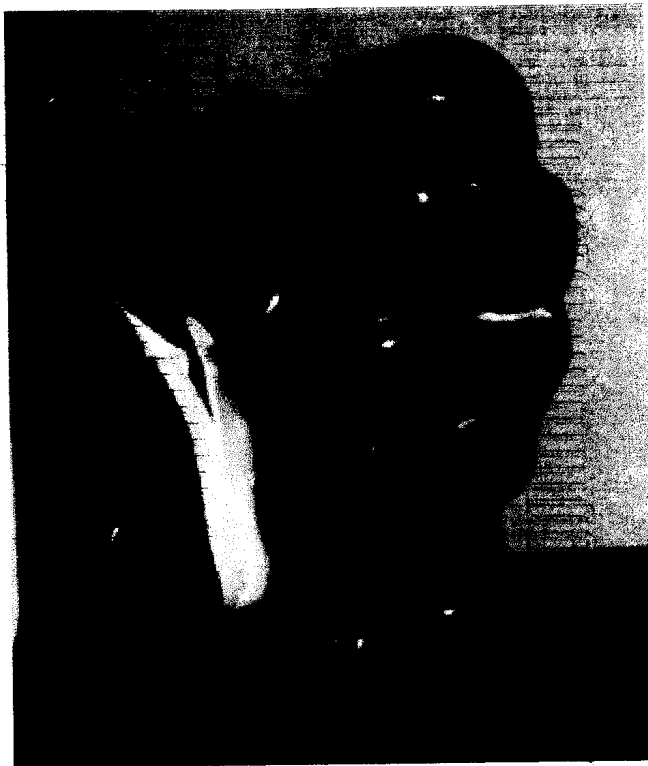


From Ted W8TP: Excerpts from the Weekly Union Newspaper of the Sea Marine Electronics Division. **SOLIDARITY AT SEA** - Following the passage of typhoon Winnie on August 10, the ARA contracted President Adams while underway from Busan to Kaohsiung in the wind swept East China Sea, received a NAVTEX message that the Panamanian-flagged, 6,388 GT, M/V ANATOLI I was in distress. Meanwhile ARA Radio Officer Paul Gatts reports, he was on his regular afternoon watch when he received a CW Morse code call from JNJ/KAGOSHIMA RADIO ON 500KHZ confirming the distress on 478/480KHZ. "We also received VHF MESSAGES from other ships and relayed them to the Japanese Safety Agency (MSA) via Morse code to JNJ."

Additionally, he said, "We made calls on 2182KHZ, VHF and 500KHZ CW in an attempt to contact the Anatoli I as directed by MSA. Coordination and direction of the search and rescue between the President Adams and the Japanese Safety Agency was conducted entirely in Morse code," Mr Gatts said. Our entire crew was occupied with search and rescue activities, so after arrival in treacherous sea conditions, the bridge was manned by the helmsmen and captain was was extremely busy maneuvering the vessel and coordinating rescue activities via UHF radio.

As darkness fell, I then moved to the bridge to assist with VHF contacts with fixed wing aircraft, helicopters, and other vessels maneuvering in the area. All told, we were in CW Morse contact with JNJ for seven hours. We were released from the distress scene by direction from a Japanese aircraft on VHF after approximately 12 hours overall crew effort." Mr. Gatts said, One comment heard was, "? Not too anxious to see the antennas pulled down after that experience.?" Of the 19 crew on board the stricken Anatoli I, 13 crew members were rescued and two bodies found by MSA helicopters and the President Adams and four crew members are still missing BT

Reminder: Straight Key  
Night is New Year's Eve!  
Black tie Optional.



I don't know well this photo is going to reproduce, but it is the picture of a giant wood-carved fist! It sits in the corner of the basement of an RV park that Ben N2REL likes to stay at in the summer. I think that is the neatest thing I've seen in a long time!

### Final

I guess that about does it for Issue 11, FISTS. At the time which I am taking this to the printers, I have not received a copy of Geo's Keynote. I'm sure it will be here soon, but I don't want to hold this up waiting for it since it's already the third week of November. Whatever I get from him will be included in the next issue, so you'll probably get a double dose of DX FISTS news next time!

I realize that the Award revisions are a surprise and disappoint many of you. I was surprised when I saw them, too. I wrote to HQ and suggested that the awards be worked in order (first a Century, then a Gold, then a Diamond). Thought that would even out the playing field a little bit, but I haven't heard anything back from them about reconsidering.

When the rules were originally created, we only had a couple hundred FISTS and it was a real challenge to work 100 points. Now we're in the thousands, so you can see how relatively easy it is to get 100 points. The WAS, and QRP and 2-way QRP WAS, offered by North American FISTS are still the same! Don't forget to put Straight Key Night on your calendar Dec 31/Jan 1. I hope to see you on the air, I don't miss that event for the world! 73 88 Nancy WZ8C

**CODE BUDDY APPLICATION**

**FISTS #**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Callsign \_\_\_\_\_ License class \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (       ) \_\_\_\_\_

Bands worked \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sked time preferred \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Times you are NOT available? \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Code Speed level \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to help a newcomer, do you need help getting your speed up,  
making those first few contacts? Pse describe your situation and/or goals:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any other info that will help us hook you up with a Code Buddy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for joining FISTS Code Buddy program. Send this info to  
Ed WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Reading PA 19606**

# FISTS C.W. Club

## Membership Application Form

Callsign\_\_\_\_\_ Name on the Air\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Name and Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The following info provides a synopsis of members' working conditions:  
Rig(s)\_\_\_\_\_

Antennas\_\_\_\_\_

Other club affiliations (ARRL, RSGB, etc)\_\_\_\_\_

Other interests\_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Email address (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you visually handicapped?\_\_\_\_\_

*Please enclose annual subs of \$15 (U.S. funds)*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Your sponsor\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**\_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to FISTS CW club and return to:  
**Nancy Kott WZ8C, POB 47, Hadley MI 48440-0047 USA**